

The practical question to put is, whether the fulfilment of our duties holds its proper place in life. Many are insisting upon their rights. Is the balance held as Jesus would hold it?

### For Teachers of the Senior Scholars

With the title of the Lesson in mind call attention to how the questions people ask are often a revelation of what they are. A wise question increases our respect for a person, and a foolish question makes us feel that there is something lacking about a person. The answers we give to the questions asked are also a revelation of character. It requires a good deal of wisdom to answer a fool according to his folly, or to answer wisely a thoughtful question. The master knew how to do this as no one else ever did. We have a good illustration of this in to-day's Lesson.

1. *The Question*, vs. 15-17. What motive prompted this question? (V. 15.) Note how determined these evil-hearted men were to destroy this great teacher whose words and works were a condemnation of the kind of life they lived and of the claims they professed. If the good that is in us has much of Christlike intensity about it we shall come into conflict with evil just as Jesus did. Illustrate by reference to martyrs of every good cause. Question the class about the method of approach of these men to Jesus (v. 16),—their flattering words which, as far as they were concerned, were mere pretence, but which expressed nothing but the truth. Ask the scholars what they think of the saying, "Never trust a person who praises you to your face." Is there as much wisdom in the saying, "Never trust a person who never praises you to your face?" Discuss this question about taxes. What was the trap which they set for Jesus? They felt that there was no way of answering this question without involving Jesus in trouble either with the Jews or with the Romans. If He answered in the affirmative, He would destroy His influence with the Jews; if He answered in the negative, He would get into trouble with the Romans. These evil emissaries must have chuckled as they involved Jesus in this dilemma.

2. *The Answer*, vs. 18-22. Bring out how indignant Jesus was with those who had resorted to a species of low, mean cunning. There is a time to be indignant, but let us make sure not to grow indignant at the wrong time. How did Jesus answer this question? Why did He ask them to show Him a penny? If they were willing to enjoy the privileges and advantages which the Romans had brought to them,—the law and order, the good roads, the commercial advantages,—as honest people they ought to be willing to pay the taxes. But in doing so they must not forget their obligations to God,—love and worship and obedience. Is there anything for us to render to the state before we reach the age when we shall be called upon to vote and pay taxes, and discharge the obligations of citizenship? We owe it to the state to develop ourselves physically and intellectually and morally as best we can. We rob the state if we grow up in any other way. What do we owe to God? Ourselves, everything. Press home the claims of God upon us and all that we have.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Begin by reminding the scholars that to-day's Lesson is only one part of a long day's dispute with the Jewish rulers. Then take up the Lesson under three heads:

1. *The plot*, vs. 15, 16. The enmity of the Pharisees against Jesus leads them to hold secret meetings, in order to devise means for entrapping Him in His own words. Point out that these Pharisees are afraid of the people who seem ready to take the part of Jesus, and that they are anxious to make Jesus appear in a bad light before the people. Then perhaps the people will turn against Him. Bring out by questioning, who are sent to carry out the plot in the Lesson. The Pharisees do not want to appear in person, and so send a deputation of their disciples. Was this the first time that the Pharisees and Herodians, usually opposed to each other, had united in opposition to Jesus? Have some one read Mark 3:6. Bring out the fact that often evil people who have not much use for each other will unite to oppose what is good.

2. *The question*, vs. 16, 17. Try to see that